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CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES $12.8 MILLION FOR WATER PROJECTS IN FOUR TREATY 9 FIRST NATIONS

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SIOUX LOOKOUT, ONTARIO (April 11, 2007) — The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, today announced $12.8 million for water treatment plant upgrades and construction in four Treaty 9 communities in Northwestern Ontario.

"Today, I am pleased to announce these projects that will address water quality issues in four communities, including Kee-way-win First Nation, one of the 21 communities identified one year ago as most at risk for waterborne health hazards in my Plan of Action for Drinking Water in First Nations Communities," said Minister Prentice.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) will provide funding as follows:

- Approximately $8.9 million for a new water treatment plant at Kee-way-win First Nation;
- About $2 million to Fort Albany First Nation for upgrades to the community's water treatment system;
- About $1.1 million towards a water treatment plant repair project at Attawapiskat First Nation; and
- Close to $800,000 to Moose Cree First Nation for repairs and upgrades to the Moose Factory water treatment plant.

"Canada's New Government is making substantial progress ensuring there is a reliable supply of safe, clean drinking water in First Nation communities," said Minister Prentice. "Last month I tabled a report (hyperlink to report) in Parliament that details the improvements that have been made over the past 12 months on water quality on reserve. That progress is continuing.

Details on these projects are contained in the attached Backgrounder, or please contact:

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Backgrounder - Progress on Water Treatment Plants in Treaty 9 Communities

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Backgrounder - Progress on Water Treatment Plants in Treaty 9 Communities

Kee-way-win (Approximately $8.9 million for construction of water treatment plant)
Kee-way-win's new water treatment system will be a conventional chemically-assisted filtration system with granular-activated carbon filtration. Construction is expected to begin in January 2008. Kee-way-win First Nation is a remote Cree community, 350 kilometres northeast of Sioux Lookout, that is accessible year-round by air. Total membership is 654 people, 354 of whom live on reserve.

Fort Albany (About $2 million for upgrades to the community's water treatment system)
INAC has been working with Fort Albany First Nation and other business partners to repair or replace some key components of the water treatment plant, the low lift station, and the wastewater pumping station. Scheduled completion date is October 2007. Fort Albany First Nation is a Cree community, 450 kilometres north of Timmins and 700 kilometres northwest of North Bay. The community's membership is 3,880 people, with 2,354 on reserve.

Attawapiskat (Approximately $1.1 million towards water treatment plant repair project)
The project involves repairing and replacing some of the key components of the community's water treatment plant. This work will improve the quality of water, and is scheduled for completion in July 2007. Attawapiskat First Nation is 350 kilometres northwest of Moosonee and is accessible year-round by air. This Cree community's total registered population is 2,870 people, 1,454 of whom live on reserve.

Moose Cree (Close to $800,000 for repairs and upgrades to Moose Factory water treatment plant)
In July 2006, an evaluation was conducted on damage to the water treatment plant's intake structure. It was determined that repairs were required to maintain a reliable water supply. While repairs were completed in October 2006, the long-term operation of the intake structure requires additional upgrades, scheduled to be completed during the summer of 2007. Moose Cree First Nation is located 300 kilometres north of Timmins. The First Nation has a membership of 3,632 people with 1,638 on reserve.

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